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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/727,859	12/04/2003	Clifford Eugene Gammons	29437.00	7911
22465	7590	03/07/2005	EXAMINER	
PITTS AND BRITTIAN P C P O BOX 51295 KNOXVILLE, TN 37950-1295			GIBSON, ROY DEAN	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3739	

DATE MAILED: 03/07/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/727,859

Applicant(s)

GAMMONS, CLIFFORD EUGENE

Examiner

Roy D. Gibson

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 04 December 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-24 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 13 and 15 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-12, 14 and 21-24 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) 16-20 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 04 December 2003 is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☒ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 12/04/2003.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Drawings

The drawings are objected to as failing to comply with 37 CFR 1.84(p)(4) because reference characters "152" and "154" have both been used to designate flow channels as well as seams with perforations.

In addition in Figures 1 and 3, the arrow for # 114 should be extended to the inside of seam 112.

Corrected drawing sheets in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d) are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. Any amended replacement drawing sheet should include all of the figures appearing on the immediate prior version of the sheet, even if only one figure is being amended. Each drawing sheet submitted after the filing date of an application must be labeled in the top margin as either "Replacement Sheet" or "New Sheet" pursuant to 37 CFR 1.121(d). If the changes are not accepted by the examiner, the applicant will be notified and informed of any required corrective action in the next Office action. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

The drawings are also objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a). The drawings must show every feature of the invention specified in the claims. Therefore, the barrier sheet of claim 3 that is continuous, has a neck cutout and that extends the entire length of the blanket (see page 7 of the Specification) must be shown or the feature(s) canceled from the claim(s). No new matter should be entered.

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Corrected drawing sheets in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d) are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. Any amended replacement drawing sheet should include all of the figures appearing on the immediate prior version of the sheet, even if only one figure is being amended. The figure or figure number of an amended drawing should not be labeled as "amended." If a drawing figure is to be canceled, the appropriate figure must be removed from the replacement sheet, and where necessary, the remaining figures must be renumbered and appropriate changes made to the brief description of the several views of the drawings for consistency. Additional replacement sheets may be necessary to show the renumbering of the remaining figures. Each drawing sheet submitted after the filing date of an application must be labeled in the top margin as either "Replacement Sheet" or "New Sheet" pursuant to 37 CFR 1.121(d). If the changes are not accepted by the examiner, the applicant will be notified and informed of any required corrective action in the next Office action. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 1-12, 14 and 21 and 23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

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Claim 1 recites the limitation "through-opening" in line 19 and claim 7 recites the same limitation in line 16. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim. The specification recites "access opening" for element # 104 and "through-opening" does not appear.

Claims 2, 12 and 14 are also rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. These claims state the blanket is "sterilized" which is the result of a process of sterilization, not an inherent characteristic of the structure of the blanket. The examiner suggests "sterilized" be replaced with "sterilizable" to clarify this. Clarification is required.

Claims 21 and 23 recite a "means for sterilization". It is unclear what the structural means or mechanism is that provides the sterilization. Clarification is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claim 16, 22 and 24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Namenye et al. (5,443,488).

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As to claim 16, Namenye et al. disclose an inflatable thermal blanket for providing a conditioned gas to a portion of a body of a human and providing access to the human, said inflatable thermal blanket comprising:

a means for forming an inflatable portion (two sheets with an exterior seam and connection points 18);

a means for introducing the gas into said inflatable portion (a blower and hose);

a means for exhausting the conditioned gas from said inflatable portion (through the "Y" shaped slits in the bottom sheet); and

a means for providing access through said inflatable portion (Figures 3-9 and col. 4, line 33-col. 47).

Further to claims 22 and 24, Namenye et al. disclose a means for securing the inflatable portion to a patient (adhesive tape or patch 52 and col. 5, line 48-col. 6, line 14) and for creating a slit (col. 6, lines 15-29).

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 13 and 15 allowed.

Claims 16-20 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Claims 2-12, 14, 21 and 23 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejection(s) under 35 U.S.C. 112, 2nd paragraph, set forth in this Office action and to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

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Conclusion

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Augustine (6,203,567) discloses an inflatable thermal blanket with a surgical drape; Augustine (6,176,870) discloses inflatable thermal blanket with surgical access; and Irani (5,405,370) discloses an air blanket with surgical access.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Roy D. Gibson whose telephone number is 571-272-4767. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F, 7:30 am-4:00 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Linda Dvorak can be reached on 571-272-4764. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).


Roy D. Gibson
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3739

March 3, 2005